

March 2007 Newsletter

Native Plant Society of Texas - South Texas Chapter



March 1st – Monthly Meeting – Guest Speaker James Gill

Our monthly meeting will be Thursday, March. 1st, 7 p.m. at the Garden Senior Center, 5325 Greely Drive, Corpus Christi.

The guest speaker will be James Gill of Gill Landscape Nursery. His topic will be “Natives You Should Plant Now.” Please feel free to come as early as 6:30 p.m. to visit with Ann and other members.

Chapter Updates

Renewed Memberships

Thank you for your continued interest and support.

Don & Rhoda Poenisch of Ingleside
James Gill of Corpus Christi

Our Next Meeting is April 5th

Speaker - T.B.A.

Donations of Raffle Items Needed for the Annual Garden Tour - from Ann Hoch

Our chapter of NPSOT is a member of the Garden Council, as are all garden clubs and organizations, which use (at no cost) the Garden Greely Center for their meetings. The annual fundraiser for the Garden Council is a Garden Tour and a Raffle, both held this year on April 28. Our chapter is being asked to contribute at least 10 items for the raffle. No minimum or maximum value has been set for the items. Items can include plants which we ourselves have grown. In connection with this, if you all will bring aluminum cans and copper to the meetings, or to Ann's house, Ann will cash those in to provide a fund to purchase for the raffle a few copies of the book, *Plants of the Texas Coastal Bend*, co-authored by our members, Dr. Roy Lehman, Ruth O'Brien and Tammy White. Later, as an ongoing fundraiser, the funds can just go into the general treasury. Please bring items for the raffle to either the March or the April meetings.

The Garden Council also needs empty coffee cans for holding the raffle tickets. Tickets are 6 for \$5, or \$1 each. Each participant places a raffle ticket into the can in front of the item that the participant hopes to win. Of course, you must first put your name on the raffle ticket! At the end of the raffle, a winning name is drawn from each coffee can.

In connection with the items donated, please include a paper indicating that the donation is from the South Texas Chapter of the Native Plant Society of Texas. If you are donating a native plant, please include (1) both the common and botanical name, (2) the fact that it is a plant native to the Coastal Bend, and 3) instructions on planting and caring for the plant. If the plant is a local herb and has known medicinal uses, please also include that. Thank you in advance for any help you can offer.

Do You Have INFO???

Do you know of an upcoming book release, workshop, lecture, or information that would be of interest to the local NPSOT members? If so, email the information to Shelly Maher at shelly_maher@hotmail.com. If applicable and space permits, it can be included in our monthly newsletter.

“Do You Know Your Natives???” Contributed by: USDA-NRCS Kika de la Garza Plant Materials Center

Little bluestem (*Schizachrium scoparium*) is a native, perennial bunchgrass. This species has five varieties, with three occurring in the South Texas region. *Schizachrium scoparium* var. *scoparium* is the variety commonly known as little bluestem. It grows 0.5-2 meters tall and does not produce creeping rhizomes. The inflorescence blooms mainly from August to December and consists of numerous racemes 2.5-5 cm long. It occurs in tallgrass prairies, wood openings, rocky slopes of lightly grazed pastures, and rangeland throughout all regions of Texas except the Pineywoods.



Little bluestem is one of the four most important forage grasses in the tallgrass prairies. The other three important, widespread grasses are switchgrass, Indiangrass, and big bluestem. Little bluestem provides good quality forage for livestock, but has poor value for wildlife forage. It is used for cover and nesting by some birds and small mammals. It is also a larval host plant for five species of skipper butterflies.

In the landscape, little bluestem provides several color changes with the seasons. Depending on the population, it ranges from a yellow-green to a blue-green in the spring and summer.

In the fall, it produces fluffy seed heads as the foliage becomes accented with yellow or red tones. As the seedheads dry and begin to lose their seeds, they turn a bright orange and remain so throughout the winter.



Info Sources: *The Grasses of Texas* - Gould, 1975; *Grasses of the Texas Gulf Coast Prairies and Marshes* -Hutch, Schuster & Drawe, 1999; *Texas Wildscapes: Gardening for Wildlife* – Damude & Bender, 1999; and research performed at the PMC

Upcoming Events at the South Texas Botanical Gardens and Nature Center (361) 852-2100
www.ccbotanicalgardens.org

- Botanica 2007—WAVES OF GREEN !, South Texas Botanical Gardens & Nature Center’s spring fundraiser, will be from 6-9:30 p.m., Friday, March 2, at the Congressman Solomon P. Ortiz International Center, 402 Port Avenue. Botanica 2007 will include a silent auction, seated dinner and entertainment. Individual tickets are \$100. For more information, please call Sponsor Chair Judy Creveling, 361/884-6983; or the Botanical Gardens & Nature Center, 361/852-2100.
- **“Birds of the Texas Coastal Bend-101,”** a short course for beginning birders, with acclaimed birder, naturalist and author **Gene Blacklock** of the Coastal Bend Bays & Estuaries Program, will be offered Saturday, March 3, at the South Texas Botanical Gardens & Nature Center, a Great Texas Coastal Birding Trail site, 8545 S. Staples Street. A lecture will be 8:45 to 11:30 a.m., with a fieldtrip 1:30 to 4:30 p.m. Students will study some of the more than 450 known bird species in South Texas. Tuition, which is \$25, \$22 for Botanical Gardens & Nature Center members, must be prepaid at the Visitors Center, by March 1. Class maximum is 30. For more information, call 361/852-2100, or 885-6247.

Calendar

- March 1st - NPSOT Monthly Meeting 7 p.m. – Speaker James Gill of Gill Landscape Nursery
- April 5th - NPSOT Monthly Meeting 7 p.m. – Speaker T.B.A.
- May 3rd - NPSOT Monthly Meeting 7 p.m. – Speaker T.B.A.

Chapter Contacts

Ann Hoch (President) (361) 991-8063 ann777@grandecom.net	Shelly Maher (Newsletter) (361) 584-1486 shelly_maher@hotmail.com	Carolyn Chancellor (CCBG Native Garden) (361) 749-4461, clchancellor@charter.net	Dr. Alice Hempel (361) 593-3804 a-hempel@tamuk.edu	Ernie Edmundson (361) 729-3990 ernie1@hughes.net
---	--	---	--	--

State Web Site www.npsot.org